

Family Wellbeing Toolkit



**KEEP COMMUNICATING,
WORK TOGETHER &
STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE**



Mental Health
Ireland

KEEP COMMUNICATING

Family
Wellbeing
Toolkit

USE REASSURING
LANGUAGE



VALIDATE
EACH
OTHER'S
FEELINGS



CONNECT
WITH FRIENDS
& FAMILY



SUPPORT
YOUR FAMILY
FROM AFAR



KEEP A
SENSE OF
HUMOUR



NURTURE
RELATIONSHIPS



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Some tips...



Validate each other's feelings.

It's important to validate feelings, especially children who are worried, frustrated or confused. Explore ways to express feelings through drawing, writing and talking it through.

Connect with family & friends.

Schedule calls & video chats with family & friends. Write letters & cards. Disconnect from media to connect with yourself & those you live with. Board games and games like 'Hide-and-seek' not only strengthens family bonds but also can create warm childhood memories.

Nurture relationships.

Relationships thrive on good communication, and a healthy mixture of together time and alone time. The grown-ups need attention too! Ask each other how you can support each other. Accept that some days are tougher than others and make allowances for that. Keep talking and agree on healthy strategies. Have a 'date night' – dinner and a movie at home could be romantic too!

Keep a sense of humour.

Laughter lifts the mood, reducing stress and raising endorphins (feel good hormones). Board games, Telling jokes, Playing Charades are some options. Finding the humour in a situation can be a game changer in terms of how we cope.

Use reassuring language.

Use age appropriate ways to describe and explain the current situation. Avoid using words like 'isolation' & 'Lock-down', instead describe the situation as 'Staying safe at home' & "We're in this together". Have conversations that explore solutions rather than problems.



WORK TOGETHER

Family
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INVOLVE
EVERYONE IN
DISCUSSIONS



MANAGE
EXPECTATIONS



SCHEDULE
DAILY &
WEEKLY
ROUTINES



ADOPT A
CAN DO
ATTITUDE



HOME-SCHOOL
TOGETHER



ENCOURAGE
EACH
OTHER



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Involve everyone in discussions.

Regular conversations about how we can help each other make the most of the situation will help develop unity. Avoiding difficult conversations often just makes matters worse. Involve everyone, at an age appropriate level, from the youngest to the oldest. It empowers each family member to feel as though they have some say, control and valuable contribution in the situation.

Manage expectations.

This is an exceptional time so we cannot expect to 'carry-on-as-normal'. Making things manageable is the order of the day and not expecting too much from everybody, especially yourself, is important for everybody's wellbeing at this time. Include down-time on the to-do-list!

Schedule daily & weekly routines

Having a regular routine helps maintain a sense of security, especially during times of uncertainty. Activities that support the wellbeing of mind, body & soul are just as important as getting the chores done. Make meal planning & daily chores a team effort and fun activities the reward. Having something to look forward to lifts the mood. Ticking off the to-do-list feels good too!

Adopt a can do attitude

Focus on what is within your control instead of what isn't. Despite all the things we cannot do right now, there are still a whole load of things we can do. By choosing to focus on the positives, your family will navigate this experience with more resilience and joy!

Home-school together.

Schedule short sessions on weekdays and observe the weekends. Avail of online tutorials or TV classrooms. Remember, a little school work goes a long way. Your kids will benefit from learning life skills at this time. Let them help write shopping lists and daily schedules. This is a lesson in itself while feeling like they're helping out!

Encourage each other

Kind words and tolerance will serve your family well. Some days are just tougher than others. Changing activity can help change the mood. Use post-its around the house with positive and helpful words on them.

STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE

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**PRIORITISE
KINDNESS
& GRATITUDE**

**PRACTICE
SELF-CARE**

**PLAN
& REVIEW**

**SHARE
IDEAS**

**LIMIT
SCREEN
TIME**

**ASK FOR
HELP**



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Some tips...



Prioritise kindness & gratitude

Practices that promote empathy and compassion will serve your family well in these times. Meal-time discussions about what we are all grateful for and 'random acts of family kindness' create more harmony. The housework, school work and your own work can come after that. Your family will remember far more about how they felt during this time than what they did!

Plan & review

Make plans together as a family and review them regularly. Invite everyone to share what's working and what we can change. Respect and value everybody's contributions and opinions. Kids (and adults alike) will learn that problems can be overcome by being creative in our approach. This is a life skill that will stand to them long after this crisis is over.

Ask for help

If things are getting fractious, reach out. If there isn't support within the family, explore external supports that meet your needs. Being resilient isn't just about drawing on your own resources but also drawing on outside resources. Remember, these are tough times and everybody needs help to get through this. "This too shall pass."

Share ideas

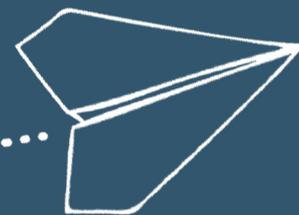
Each family member has valuable contributions and opinions to offer at this time. Allowing their voices to be heard and ideas taken on board helps build confidence and promotes positive behavior.

Limit screen time

Over exposure to news and media adds to stress levels for the whole family. Two news bulletins a day is more than enough to keep you updated and limit your time on news feeds & social media. Get your information only from reliable sources.

Practice self-care

Taking care of yourself is vital at this time. "You cannot pour from an empty cup". Relaxation is the antidote to stress. Do things that you find relaxing. Eat well. Take adequate exercise. Soak in the bath. Listen to music. Read poetry. Mind yourself.



Turn over
for a list of
resources...

LIST OF RESOURCES

KEEP COMMUNICATING

Weaving Well-Being: Fiona Forman - [Webpage](#)

3 Important Lessons on Mindful Communication - [Article](#)

Talking to Children and Young People about Covid-19 - [Article](#)

Walk away from the Relationship Monster - [Article](#)

Mental Health Ireland Connect, Communicate & Reassure - [Resource Pack](#) Fun Ideas to Keep you Entertained during Lockdown - [Article/List](#)

WORK TOGETHER

TUSLA Parenting Information & Resources - [Webpage](#)

12 Websites Every Irish Parent Should Know About - [Article](#)

One Family Parenting Resources - [Website](#)

Mental Health Ireland Covid-19 Resources - [Webpage](#)

Classroom & Home-school Resources - [Website](#)

National Council for Special Education Resources for Parents - [Webpage](#) Shane Hastings

List of Free Products & Resources during Covid-19 - [Website](#) What If Schools Taught Kindness? - [Article](#)

Coping With Changes in the Home Amid Covid-19 - [Article](#)

STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE

Mental Health Ireland Five Ways for Tough Times - [Webpage](#)

The Space Inbetween - [Blog](#)

HSE Covid-19 Information - [Website](#)

Gov.ie Covid-19 Updates - [Website](#)

Gov.ie Mental Health Supports during Covid-19 - [Website](#)

A Simple Mindful Gratitude Exercise - [Article](#)

Weaving Well-Being: Fiona Forman - [Webpage](#)

Mental Health Ireland Routine Template - [Downloadable PDF](#)

List of Family & Emergency Supports - [Downloadable Word Document](#)

